

# SHADOW + LIGHT



## WEEK 4



## JOURNEY TO SELF-MASTERY

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# love letters to your shadow

This week we're entering into a healing conversation with the aspects of ourselves we've shunned in our Shadow.

All emotions are energy: think of the sheer potency of anger or lust, or the divine radiance of compassion and empathy.

This is why it's easy to get swept away in the power of love and fear.

One simple yet powerful way to externalize these energies and transform our inner state (which ripples out into our own energy, resulting in new mindsets, new behaviors, and new outcomes in life) is the following writing exercise.

As we know by now, when you judge yourself for experiencing whatever you've labeled as "less than" (anger, self-doubt, procrastination, etc.) you only shove those states deeper into our Shadow, where they remain unconscious — and where they can wreak all kinds of havoc in your life.

Externalizing these inner states through writing helps to concretize them and reframe your relationship within yourself (i.e. healing your negative self-talk and quieting a chatty inner critic).

## write a love letter to your shadow

1. **Choose a Shadow Aspect** you're currently working to heal and embrace: fear of abandonment, self-doubt, scarcity, fear of being seen, etc. Note: if using "fear," I suggest making it specific, since fear itself is such a broad emotion.

2. Take out a piece of paper and write at the top: **Dear {Shadow Aspect you've chosen}.**

3. On the next line, begin by writing, **"Thank you..."** and fill in the rest.

**What has this Shadow aspect taught you?**

*For example, if using Fear of Death, you can thank your Fear of Death for protecting you from harm, for wanting to help keep you safe, or for making you strong when you felt threatened and you had to stand up for yourself. There are so many ways Fear benefits us, but Fear often gets purely a bad rap. In Shadow Work, nothing is purely good nor bad.*

In healthy doses, Fear can be our great ally.

When shamed and ignored, Fear runs wild within our hearts and minds and reactions, often sabotaging us. Take some time to really consider how Fear has been your friend along your journey.

4. Write at least 2 specific examples of how Fear of Death, Anxiety, or whatever Shadow Aspect you've chosen has helped you.

5. Notice, as you write, what potential emotional, mental, physical, or energetic shifts occur.

*Do you sense a softening around your chest?*

*Are the muscles in your face and shoulders loosening their grip?*

*Is there a feeling of warmth in your body?*

Write down any of these sensations at the bottom of your letter or on a separate page.

**Remember, your Shadow is your companion, not your enemy.**

**When you can appreciate a quality you've judged, you begin to more fully appreciate and embrace yourself.**

# example: love letter to scarcity mindset

Here's an example of Melissa's own love letter to her scarcity mindset (the warped, unconscious desire to live in financial lack, which was secretly sabotaging her ability to grow, manifest, and receive abundance):

*Dear Scarcity,*

*Thank you. I know you only ever meant the best for me. You know I never want to be materialistic, vapid, or caught up in the bullshit cycle of craving the latest shiny object.*

*You've definitely protected me from those afflicted states, and I thank you — thing is, you're really good at your job, Scarcity. So good that you're not only stopping me from being materialistic, you're also preventing me from asking for what I'm worth and receiving abundance for my work in the world. We've taken things a bit too far, don't you think?*

*We absorbed the conditioned belief that to be broke was to be virtuous. This was the perfect ego trap: by feeling morally superior to the "others" I judged as materialistic, my ego inflated (without realizing it).*

*We bought the whole “Starving Artist” mentality hook, line, and sinker. You've made me feel ashamed to share my creative work online, for fear I might appear like a sell-out.*

*We believed capitalism was the enemy, and it felt good to have a big, abstract institution to blame and complain about. Let's face it: things are easier when there's someone or something to scapegoat — it's prevented me from doing this deeper inquiry and self-reflection for a long time.*

*Let's also face this big Truth: resentment actually feels good. It feels righteous. And it's addictive. It's been easy and weirdly satisfying to resent money, corporate greed, and vapid strangers.*

*That's why I fled my well-paying corporate job at an ad agency (also I knew my calling was through teaching, not writing headlines for Sam's Club products) and went back to grad school for creative writing. I thought academia would be a haven from the dumb greed I saw in corporate America. But alas, academia is a business too, and at the end of the day I'm a part of a capitalist engine.*

*We both realize that we exist in a capitalist society, instead of railing against a system while half-heartedly participating in it, I can embrace the broken system and use money as a catalyst for positive change, which I can't do if I'm hanging out with you, Scarcity, sabotaging my power.*

*Instead of loathing money as “the root of all evil,” I will use the electric force of money for good in the world. Because I do less good in this world when I'm rushing around town from yoga gig to teaching gig, trying to cobble together income doing what I love and feeling weird about asking for higher rates.*

*I am better equipped to create the kind of positive changes I want to see in the world if I have more time, freedom, and resources. Money gives me access to all of these things.*

*Money is not inherently good nor bad — same goes for people, institutions, everything. There is no inherent existence.*

*So I want to thank you for your services, because I won't be needing them any longer.*

*Scarcity, I appreciate you.*

*You've kept me humble (I hope).*

*You've kept my intentions in the right place.*

*You've helped me align with my dharma, to help others discover the inner peace and inner power that exists through yoga, meditation, writing, and Shadow Integration.*

*in gratitude,*

*Melissa*



# your turn

Follow the steps on page 1, but here's the trick:

**write this letter more than once to the same Shadow Aspect. We recommend three times.**



Why do this exercise more than once for the same issue you're trying to resolve and embrace?

Your unconscious holds a strong grip to this quality: that's precisely why you're seeing this pattern of emotional energy & behavior appear in your life...  
...and it's likely why you've chosen it for this exercise.

By writing a series of love letters, you're further installing new software to help reprogram the old pattern. Chances are just one go around won't create the kinds of big shifts we want you to experience in this course.

Think of a desperate lover, who writes feverish letters to the Beloved. They don't just write one and consider it done. They repeat themselves. "I love you, I love you, I love you..."

....and so you, too, will repeat yourself as you write your series of letters for the same emotion/pattern this week.

Furthermore, the more you write and repeat yourself -- just like with automatic writing -- new insights and stored energies will be unleashed...but it takes time to dig into this new narrative to access that stored prana.

**Your shovel is your pen, your method is compassion, and the buried treasure you're seeking lies beneath your judgments against yourself.**